

SALEM COUNTY

Women Artists

AUTOBIOGRAPHIES

These are but a few of the many talented women artists who reside and create in Salem County, many of whom (as well as some men) will be taking part in

The Salem County Arts in Bloom Studio Tour

on Saturday and Sunday, May 17-18. Your chance to see where "art is happening" in Salem County.

Grace Alliegro	Annette Devitt	Joanne Martin	
Carole Bower	Kimberly English	Maria Payer	Marlene Thomas
Molly Carpenter	Mary Herz	Mari Sheairs	Marion Williams
Kaye Chard	Helen Karol	Tucker Stouch	
Deb DeMarco	Diana Locuson	Gloria Stumm	

Grace Spina Alliegro

I began drawing at a very early age, mostly faces of movie stars who appeared on various magazine covers. During my freshman year at Salem High School, I was able to paint my first oil painting during art class. In 1962 I graduated from Glassboro State College with a BA degree in Education. My teaching career began at Central Park School in the Pennsville Public School District where it continued for 40 years. Drawing became part of my daily routine: bulletin boards, hall boards, program covers, and scenery for plays.

In 1987 I became a member of the Pennsville Township Historical Society and had the opportunity to create drawings for their cookbook, mugs, tee shirts, history books program covers, float designs, as well as a map of Riverview Beach Park that included all the amusement rides and attractions.

I joined the Salem County Art League in 2007, and in January 2008 began to take art lessons in watercolor. My art classes began with Marie Natale. I have continued studying with Marie to the present. Other people with whom I have taken a variety of classes and workshops include: Tony Parisi, Carol Miller, Alex Alampi, Jr., Maureen Gas-Brown, and Keith Hoffman.

I have won three awards in the past four years in the NonProfessional Watercolor Division in the annual New Jersey Senior Citizen Art Contest and Exhibit.

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Carole Bower

I have always enjoyed drawing and sketching. My first paintings were with oil and tempera paints in Mr. Matzer's art class while in Salem High School.

Since retirement in 2007, I paint at home as a hobby for enjoyment and with my granddaughters when babysitting for them. After taking a workshop with the Salem County Art League, I now enjoy painting with other Art League members in their open studio each week.

I plan to take other workshops the Art League offers to improve my skills and make my retirement even more enjoyable and fun by meeting new people with the same interests.

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Molly Sanger Carpenter

I have been fascinated by art for as long as I can remember. My early interests included painting, pottery, and sculpture. I studied through my school years with teachers Bernie Felch and Helen Mason, and interned with sculptor Charles Cropper Parks during my senior High School project, where I gained experience in sculpture enlargement and reduction, mold making and casting. I attended The Frudakis Academy of Fine Art working with sculptor Evangelos Frudakis in figurative and portrait sculpture and the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Art, while continuing to work with Charles Parks. Later, after establishing my studio, I continued my education, studying glass art and getting my certificate in welding. Most recently I have learned the mosaic techniques of Philadelphia artist Isaiah Zagar.

In 1986 at the age of 26, I received a major commission from the Delaware Heritage Commission for the Constitutional Compass Rose on Legislative Mall in Dover, many private and public commissions have followed. Most recently I have installed work at the Cumberland County Library (NJ) and Atlantic City's Sculpture Walk, sponsored by the Casino Reinvestment Development Authority – in partnership with the Noyes Museum of Art of Stockton College.

My work has been widely exhibited and is in many private and public art collections worldwide. It has been on view at the Philadelphia Flower Show, and at venues in New York City, including the Colosseum, Rockefeller Center, Ted Turner's Goodwill Games, The National Arts Club on Gramercy Park and with the Catherine Lorillard Wolfe Society, the Hudson Valley Artists Association, and at the headquarters of the National Sculpture Society. Currently I am represented by Hope Gallery in Bristol, Rhode Island, Hardcastle Gallery of Delaware, and the Gallery at Centerville in Delaware, The Mullica Hill Art Center in Mullica Hill, NJ, and Galerie Marie in Collingswood, NJ.

I am constantly seeking opportunities to learn new materials and techniques. I have experience in wood, bronze, stone, glass, hot glass, resin, gold leaf, wax, concrete, plaster, clay, oils and acrylics. I seek to create images that resonate with wonder and delight that transform the viewer, if only for a moment.

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Kaye Chard

A clay artist, Kaye was born and raised in Pierre, South Dakota. In high school and then again for two years at the University of South Dakota, she studied art under Oscar Howe. she finished her art education degree at Glassboro State College. While there, she discovered clay and that she just loved “playing in the mud.”

Kaye now maintains homes and studios in South Dakota and Alloway, NJ. She worked for many years as a placement counselor for the handicapped before quitting to pursue her love of clay.

Kaye likes to preserve nature in clay and uses grasses and other objects as part of her design. Each of her pieces is an original as she is not a production potter. Hers is functional pottery—works of art to enjoy using.

Kaye has two children, three stepchildren, and twelve grandchildren. She is teaching some of the grandchildren to work in clay.

Although Kaye has lived in New Jersey since 1962, Kaye has always maintained her roots in South Dakota.

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Deb DeMarco

I have been working as an independent glass artist since 2006. It has been both a challenge and rewarding experience for me. As a volunteer at Wheaton Arts and Cultural Center since 2005, I demonstrate flame working on a weekly basis. I teach community education at both Wheaton Arts and the Samuel H. Glass Center at Salem Community College. My representation includes several area galleries, such as The Paperweight Shop and The Brownstone at Wheaton Arts and Cultural Center, The Riverfront Renaissance Center for the Arts, La Bottega of Art, and the Noyes Art Museum and Gallery.

My work includes original glass creations and original bead jewelry. In 2009, I published an instructional book, Off-Loom Woven Bead Necklaces.

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Annette Devitt

Annette Devitt is a County 4-H Agent with Rutgers Cooperative Extension by day and an artist by night. Her first love is fiber arts. As a weaver, spinner, and knitter, Annette is well aware of the interplay of colors in her fiber creations. This understanding of color has been an invaluable resource since starting to do watercolor painting five years ago.

Annette also enjoys photography and through her photography experience, she has gained a keen eye for composition.

By combining her love for color and interesting compositions, Annette strives to create paintings that provide a unique snapshot of the world around us.

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Kimberly English

Art has always been a part of Kimberly English's life. As a child she would spend her time drawing her favorite characters from VCR boxes and comic strip clippings from the local newspaper. When entering high school, Kimberly was chosen to be in the first class of Salem County Vocational Technical School's Art Academy hosted at Arthur P. Schalick High School. After high school, she continued her education through the NJ Stars I & II scholarship at Salem Community College and Rowan University where she studied under world-renowned acrylic landscape artist, Daniel Chard.

Kimberly English graduated Summa Cum Laude from Rowan University in May 2010 with a BA in Art Education and a BA in K-12 Subject-Matter Teaching. She is an acrylic landscape painter and certified art teacher at Mary E. Roberts Elementary School in Moorestown, NJ. She resides with her husband, Chester, in the rural farming town of Aldine, NJ. The surroundings provide endless subject matter and artistic inspiration while the atmosphere offers the opportunity for reflection.

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Mary Herz

Growing up, art was always an underlying interest of mine. A new box of crayons and new coloring book were a delight. Drawing was a great past time. Arts and crafts in school, Girl Scouts, and other outside activities were great creative adventures. Art was something with which to have fun. Later, as a business education teacher, my “artistic talents” turned exclusively to creating bulletin board materials for the classroom.

After retiring in 2003 with 34 years spent in education, the time to do things I just wanted to do, which had always been a scarce commodity, became available. An advertisement in the local paper for watercolor lessons turned out to be my invitation to begin again. It was that art class that put me on the path to new interests and new possibilities. Since taking those first watercolor classes with instructor, Carol Kirk Miller, I have taken part in numerous watercolor workshops with artists such as Tony Parisi, Marie Natale, Tony Couch, James Toogood, Daniel Chard, Alex Alampi, and Sterling Edwards as well as continuing education courses at Delaware College of Art and Design.

Joining the Salem County Art League also led to new opportunities and new friends. Some of the best “instruction” has come from painting with Art League friends as a member of their weekly open studio painting group. Revisiting art from my early experiences has not only been personally gratifying but also has led to another hobby, art collecting. Art appreciation is a happy accident, and gratefully acknowledged as an added benefit of my new art experience.

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Helen Karol

Helen was born in Philadelphia, PA, and began drawing around the age of 6. While in high school, she attended Moore College of Art on Saturdays. After high school, she chose to further her education at the University of the Arts.

Helen enjoys painting a wide variety of subjects. From commissioned photographic quality portraits, landscapes and wildlife to abstract art, china painting, and deconstructing mannequins. Her finished pieces lend themselves to free-form shapes, incorporating metal or hand crafting barn wood for the frames.

A few years ago she formed a 3D archery target repair company that archery clubs have been utilizing. It's more involved than just repairing a blown out target. The reconstruction and research into the physical traits of each target is very involved because the end result is a realistic finish. (www.3DArcheryRepairsPlusLLC)

"I feel art is something that is a unique, personal connection. The frame and actual finished shape of the piece should lend itself to completing the visual communication and just a structure to accommodate a hook on the wall.

My art is an expression of something that I feel passionate about, therefore rules of conformity are not only obsolete but also stifles creativity."

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Diana Locuson

I am a leather artist and owner of Diana's Leather Shoppe in Alloway, NJ. Growing up, I lived on a small farm in Pennsville and graduated from Pennsville Memorial High School in 1960 where I won an award in Art. I was one of the original members of the Salem County 4-H Hoofbeats Club in 1958, and as part of the 4-H group, I as one of several members who gathered at the home of Jack and Laird Dare in Quinton to learn the art of leather crafting. Jack had learned leather crafting while assigned to a ship in the Navy. I moved to Alloway in 1970 and am retired from DuPont. Currently, I serve as president of Wistarburg Ruritan in Alloway. I am also a participating member of the Salem County Arts in Bloom tour.

Leather crafting is a dying art, and I have continued to learn more about it throughout my adult life.

I specialize in custom-made hand-carved belts, wallets, bags, and knife sheaths. Leather is very expensive but very durable. Good leather belts with reasonable care can last 20 to 30 years. I have several hundred carving and stamping tools with which I can create numerous designs. Leather items can be personalized with several choices of different sized and style letters.

I have taken classes at Sheridan Wyoming Leather trade shows and learned new techniques from many professional leather workers. I have exhibited at many craft shows in New Jersey, Delaware, Pennsylvania, and Maryland and offer free workshops for children. Diana's Leather Shoppe was opened in 1998 in Alloway and offers excellent quality leather goods created by me and others.

I have one one daughter and three grandsons. The oldest two grandsons have helped in the Leather Shoppe, at craft shows, and the Delaware and Virginia State Fairs.

I moved to Alloway in 1970. I am retired from DuPont and serve as president of Wistarburg Ruritan in Alloway. I am also a participating member of the Salem County Arts in Bloom tour.

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Maria Lucas Payer

As a teen, I left my familiar, pastoral, southern New Jersey hometown in order to attend college only minutes from New York. After graduating with a BA degree from Montclair State in 1964, I expected to make my life's work that of encouraging elementary school children to experience the pure joy of making art.

Fourteen years passed before my predictable path was intersected. In 1978 my husband's occupation required relocating from New Jersey to Houston, Texas. The sharp geographical contrast proved both challenging and inspiring. Led by my personal passion for color and form, and influenced by the space and scale of the region, I was driven to explore and connect in some way with this new "Texas experience." Longing to learn more of the people and the bold local style, I chose residential design as her medium.

Once established and familiar with the Houston area, I was free to seek a more personal avenue for self-expression. From 1982 to 1985, I worked to examine my own mark while studying with watercolorist, Polly Hammett, at the Houston Art League. That important, initial creative hiatus came to an end when my husband's successive project relocations demanded adaptation to unfamiliar yet exciting surroundings. Whether in a coastal New Hampshire village or a city block in San Francisco, I set about making friends, reestablishing my design business, and moving on.

In 1998 my husband's work involved yet another move; this time to Gatlinburg, Tennessee. Once settled, I understood this special place could afford the time and place to focus on my personal artistic search. Ensclosed in the mountains of East Tennessee, I attended Arrowmont, a nationally recognized school of arts and crafts. It was here that I experienced a fresh awakening. I studied printmaking with Anita Jung, drawing with Tom Christenson, and painting with Marcia Goldstein. As the graphite, ink, or watercolor sprawled across the page, the energy and impressions flowed. In the spring of 2000, I was invited to show my work both in Saintes, France, and Vineland, New Jersey. In 2004 a second exhibit of my work was mounted at the Centre d'Etude d'Architecture et d'Urbanisme in Saintes, France.

Shortly after that artistic breakthrough, I was asked once again to alter my course. Following my husband's retirement, John and I made a decision to return to the Philadelphia area. This last relocation allowed me to return to the familiar surroundings of southern New Jersey and the unity of friends and family. Here, in the rural landscape of Salem County, I have recently rekindled my connection to brush and paper.

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Mari Sheairs

Mari grew up in Philadelphia, and graduated from Moore College of Art and Design. She earned a BFA in Fashion Illustration and Advertising. Mari spent ten years as a Digital Product Designer for Lenox Brands before getting married and moving to Southern New Jersey, where she established her studio.

One of her more notable artworks was a life-size fiberglass cow for the Harrisburg CowParade, entitled "Constance the Constitution Cow" -- a public art piece where she penned the phrase "A Cow for the People" and handscripted the words of the US Constitution onto its back. Mari is currently working on a series of floral inspired sculpted vases.

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Tucker Stouch

Both of my parents were accomplished artists. My dad was a children's book illustrator who did several popular "Little Golden Books." My mother published pen & ink illustrations. After graduating from Moore College of Art & Design and working as a graphic designer and art director for all types of industries, I discovered my love of craft design and the joy of teaching. It was very rewarding to help establish and manage "The HeArt of Friendship Art Gallery" in Ephrata, PA.

I have since taught and demonstrated to people of all ages and have worked extensively with people with disabilities. I love experimenting with painting and recently completed a book on "Water-Based Texturing". Teaching has enabled me to continue learning and creating with a constant stream of new materials.

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Gloria Stumm

Working in the medium of watercolor, a native of San Francisco, California, and has made South Jersey my home for over thirty years. I began my art career as a young child, strongly influenced by family and the local area museums, and gathering inspiration from the sights of the Bay Area.

I received my BA in Art from San Francisco State University and my MA in Art Education from Rowan University. I am a retired educator who has dedicated almost thirty years to teaching drawing, painting, ceramics, and fiber arts to first through twelfth graders in the New Jersey Public School System. One of my most treasured moments was in 1998 when one of my National Honor Society students selected me as her "Most Influential Teacher."

I paint in the watercolor medium because I am fascinated and intrigued by the magical blending of the colors. My eyes are attracted to their delicate transparency and I love the smooth and varying marks the brush allows my hand to create with the pigments. To me, watercolor is a magical evolution with a surprise ending.

I liberate my ideas by documenting images to which I am attracted through my photography and sketches. I enjoy the transformation of imagery from drawing to painting. Organic line, graceful forms, and the dynamic, sensitive colors of nature inspire me. I am attracted to the spectrum of the seasons and the color harmonies within each of them. As I play with the soft and crisp color relationships, I am filled with a sense of joy and energy. When I work with watercolor, I am reminded that, as in life, one can explore so many new possibilities

When you view my work, I would like you to feel a beautiful moment and a unique experience. Allow me to let my paintings to take you on an artistic journey to an inner emotion, a time, a place.... "

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Marlene Thomas

Marlene is a lifetime resident of South Jersey, raised in Cumberland County and living the past several years in the rural farmland of Salem County.

While always having an interest in art, it wasn't until her sons were in school that she pursued her interest by signing up for a decorative painting class offered at the mall. That class led to many years of painting sawscapes, lamps, miscellaneous items, and anything that didn't move.

Later she gave up the decorative field and focused on fine art. Upon joining the Salem County Art League, Marlene has taken several workshops in watercolor, acrylic, and oil painting and has participated in many of the Art Leagues' exhibits throughout the past several years.

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Marion Williams

From childhood, I was always interest in artistic endeavors, from coloring books and drawing to crafts in general, but never had any formal training in art throughout school.

After the birth of our fourth child, I sent away for some lessons in tole painting and got very active in it for a few years. In 1970, I saw some china painting patterns somewhere and all my interest became focused on learning this very delicate art. I found a teacher, Edith Ashcraft, from Swedesboro, and she taught me enough in about two years to strike out on my own. Over the years, I started going to craft shows, putting pieces in local shops, and even taught a few students for a few years. It continues to this day to be my main passion, and I paint almost every day if only for an hour or so. I belong to a group of china painters that meets in Elmer each month. (PPSNJ—Porcelain Painters of New Jersey, Salem County Chapter)

Watercolor also is very interesting to me, and I have taken a few classes with Marie Natale and Alex Alampi.

Recently, I've started again to try my hand at oil painting and plan to do more of it.

I think that belonging to the Salem County Art League has increased my interest in all kinds of painting.

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